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ABSTRACT

Human relations training is a requirement for all teacher education majors graduating from Iowa colleges and universities. At the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) this course is delivered to preservice teacher education students in conjunction with their full semester student teaching experience. Major goals of the training program are: (1) to confront individuals with experiences designed to create an awareness of biases, attitudes, and beliefs and to create awareness of the degree of congruency between stated beliefs and actual behavior; and (2) to internalize and translate such awareness into actions which result in more positive relationships within the teaching/learning environment. In each of UNI's student teaching centers, the course is administered and delivered by a combination of UNI professor, clinical supervisor, and a cadre of practitioners. The course content includes: cooperative learning practices, classroom "ice breakers," removing bias from the classroom, values/self-esteem, children at risk, perceptions we have (e.g., race, homosexuality), and the psychology of winning. Each student teacher is required to do at least one action research project. The course meets requirements for teacher licensure in Iowa, allows professional staff to establish a workable rapport with student teachers, offers a vehicle for demonstrating effective teaching practices, gives student teachers the opportunity to make creative contributions to their cooperating teacher's classroom, and proves that human relations are not just theoretical concepts. (LL)

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HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

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HUMAN RELATIONS TRAINING FOR STUDENT TEACHERS

Description and overview

Human Relations Training is a requirement for all teacher education majors graduating from an Iowa college or university. At the University of Northern Iowa (UNI) this course is delivered to pre-service teacher education students in conjunction with their full semester student teaching experience. This 3 semester hour training program meets the requirements for teacher licensure in Iowa.

The major goals of this training program are:

1. Basic awareness - to confront individuals with experiences designed to create an awareness of biases, attitudes, and beliefs and to create awareness of the degree of congruency between stated beliefs and actual behavior.

2. Internalizing awareness to action - to translate awareness into beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors which result in more positive relationships within the teaching/learning environment.

Since a considerable portion of teaching involves human interactions, it is clear that a natural link exists between the act of teaching and the application of human relationships concepts. Therefore, one major emphasis in the delivery system of this training program is effective teaching practices. Both scientific principles of teaching and artistic delivery practices are modeled and integrated into the this course's content.

Course Delivery Practices

UNI has 9 student teaching centers in Iowa; 1 in Okinawa, Japan; and 1 in San Antonio, TX. Approximately 750 student teachers have the Human Relations course taught to them in these centers each academic year. In each center there is a UNI professor who coordinates all center activities, a clinical supervisor (a practitioner) who works part time for UNI, and a cadre (5 - 27 practitioners) who help advise the professor and carry out center objectives. This organizational arrangement is part of the collaborative partnership agreement UNI has with all centers. How the Human Relations course is delivered varies from center to center. But as a general practice all of these personnel are involved in its delivery.

The professor determines how state mandates will be met, the precise course format and calendar, and what personnel will be involved in the instructional process. A typical calendar arrangement would be to partially "front load" the course and then to complete it by "middle loading". This means the professor would require student teachers to complete approximately 20 clock hours of this 45 clock hour course before they begin their first student teaching placement and then they would complete the remaining 25 clock hours after placement #1 and just before they begin their second student teaching placement. Other calendar arrangements tried have been to completely "front load" the course, completely "middle load" the course, and some professors do 3 clock hours each week for 15 weeks. Our research does not clearly delineate which

calendar organization is most successful.

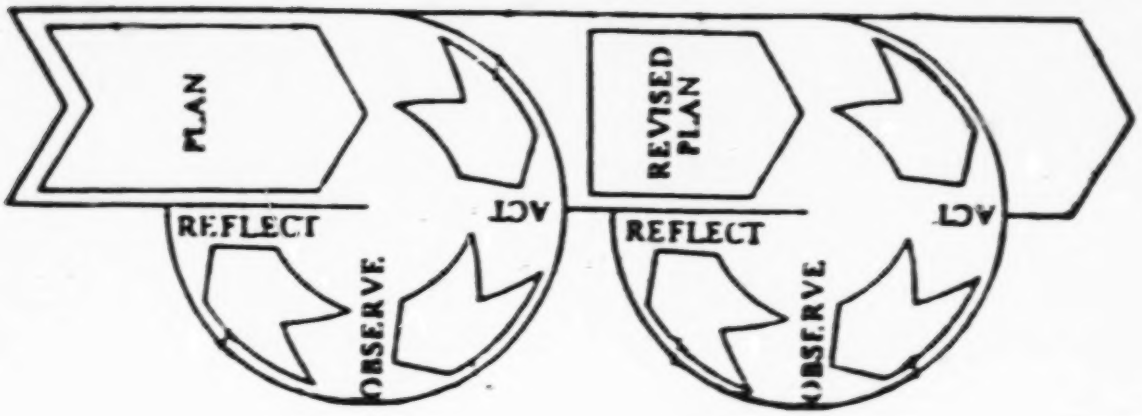
Course content and projects

Licensed teachers in Iowa must demonstrate they are aware of various values and lifestyles of subgroups found in our society. They must recognize and be able to deal with dehumanizing biases such as sexism, racism, and ageism by translating these into positive learning experiences for pupils. Respecting human diversity and the rights of each individual is a competency every teacher must personally possess and advocate to pupils.

The abbreviated list of Human Relations course inclusions stated below help student teachers gain knowledge about human diversity, experience emotions related to human interactions, and show student teachers how to organize and incorporate human relationship activities that support the regular curriculum into their instructional program.

1. Cooperative learning as an instructional practice
2. Classroom "ice breakers" that establish positive interdependence
3. Removing bias from the classroom
   - 3.1 Guidelines for non-sexists use of language
   - 3.2 Sex-role stereotyping (Race/age/occupational)
   - 3.3 Questions you have always want to ask about...
4. Children learn what they live (Values/self-esteem)
5. Children at-risk
6. Perceptions we have (race/homosexuality...)
7. The psychology of winning

Every student teacher is required to do at least one action research project. Some professors require two, one for each student teaching placement. The general action research model is is displayed on the next page of this manuscript.



The student teacher must have the cooperating teacher's approval before the plan is acted upon, the plan must be "self-contained" i.e. is must be completed during the student teacher's placement so the cooperating teacher has no responsibility to continue the plan after the student teacher leaves this placement, and the student teacher must summarize his findings in a two page paper that he presents and distributes to his peers at a seminar.

The benefits of doing action research are: research is practiced in a classroom setting, cooperating teachers add knowledge and activities to their future instructional program, student teachers leave the seminar with 25 or more ideas for future action research projects, and student teachers gain confidence in presenting research to colleagues.

Action research projects are not limited to human relationships. Academic, professional, and technology projects are acceptable.

The examples below are recent titles student teacher gave to their action research projects:

1. Pen Pals Via Telenet
2. Ways To Enhance A Child's Self-Concept
3. Clarifying Children's Values
4. Using Cooperative Learning Structures To Promote Harmony
5. Teaching The Psychology of Winning: A learning Center
6. Using Classroom Monitors To Reduce Conflict
7. Using A Non-School Agency As A Resource

Summary

Student teachers came to their student teaching assignment aware of "politically correct" issues, but they were unsure what they should do with their knowledge. The Human Relations course has allowed the center's professional team (professor, clinical supervisor, cadre) to establish a workable rapport with the student teachers, it has given the team a vehicle for demonstrating effective teaching practices, it has given student teachers the opportunity to make creative contributions to their cooperating teacher's classroom, and it has proven that human relations are not just theoretical concepts. Incorporating human relations into the student teaching semester has made the "politically correct" issues real and alive. Human relations has impacted young teacher's professionalism and it has enhanced the curriculum they teach.